

Chronological Bible Study

Week 48

Letters of the Apostles

Acts 27:1-15; 28:16-31

Phelomen: 1:1-25

Colossians 1:1-4:18

Ephesians 1:1-6:24

Titus 1:1-6:21

1 Timothy 1:1-6:21

2 Timothy 1:1-4:22

1 Peter 1:1-5:14

Jude 1:1-25

2 Peter 1:1-3:18

Prayer Based on Colossians 1:15-20

15 Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation.

16 For through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him.

17 He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together.

18 Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything.

19 For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, 20 and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

Dear Lord Jesus, you are most **worthy** of our adoration, affection, and allegiance. Because of you, we don't have to guess what God's is like, or worse, create our own image of him. **Everything** we need to know about God is revealed in and through you. With the Father and Spirit, you have **always** existed in perfect relationship and unimaginable wonder.

Everything that exists has been created **by** you and **for** you—things visible and invisible; things that comfort us (food, air, and water) and things that threaten us (thrones, kingdoms, and rules). You are not “just” Creator, you are the heir of everything.

And though things often seem random, out-of-control, and anarchic, you—quite literally, have the *whole* world in your hands—sustaining and orchestrating, planning and effecting. Sovereign grace, not karma, rules.

You love your church more than we can imagine, and as surely as you have justified her, you will beautify her. Forgive us for thinking we can have you, and not her. Because of your resurrection, we too have been raised spiritually, and will be raised physically. Hallelujah, death has been crushed. Your supremacy, in and over all things is unthreatened, and will be fully manifested one Day. We can hardly wait!

Heaven and earth will be married once again. The finished work of your cross has secured the eternal peace for which we long—in us and all around us. Everything sad will come untrue; all things broken will become all things new; all cacophony will give way to eternal symphony. Come, Lord Jesus, come! So very Amen we pray, in your grace-full and mighty name.



Check –in ... anything to share?

Introductions

Questions?

Comments?

Summary of This Week's Readings

- Paul in Rome
- Letter to Philemon
- Letter to the Colossians
- Letter to the Ephesians
- Letters to Timothy
- Letter to Titus
- Peter's Letters
- Letter of Jude

Paul in Rome

- Spent 2 years in Rome under house arrest
- He arrived as a prisoner in ~61 AD while awaiting trial before emperor Nero
- Preached the gospel to Jewish leaders and Caesar's praetorium.
- Wrote several of his letters: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon
- Luke, Timothy, Aristarchus, Epaphrus, Joshua Justus, Demas, and John Mark visit him in Rome
- In 63 AD he is acquitted and freed. He conducts his 5th and final missionary journey.
- Mark and Luke likely wrote their gospels in Rome at the same time
- Taken prisoner again in Rome in 67 AD
- Paul's trial and execution not described in Acts
- Legend says he was beheaded as a martyr in 68 AD



Paul was arrested in Jerusalem's temple in late spring of 58 AD. He is falsely accused of defiling the temple and teaching others to disobey God. Soldiers of Rome stationed in Jerusalem, alerted of a riot, rush to the scene and arrest Paul as several Jews were in the act of beating him to death (Acts 21:30 - 33). Believing he is the cause of the uproar in Jerusalem, they take the apostle, under armed guard, to the city of Caesarea where his case can be heard by governor appointed by Rome. Because he is a citizen of Rome (see Acts 22:25 - 28), Paul is afforded the right to have the case against him heard before Roman Emperor Nero. After languishing in a Caesarea prison for more than two years, the apostle has an initial hearing before Governor Festus (Acts 25:1 - 12). Unwilling to go back to Jerusalem to have his case fully heard before his accusers, Paul requests that the charges against him be brought before Emperor Nero in Rome.

He is then taken as a prisoner to the Empire's capital city and, after a trip full of trials and troubles, finally arrives there in late winter of 61 A.D.

Paul the Apostle spent two years in Rome under house arrest, where he preached the gospel to Jewish leaders and Caesar's praetorium. Paul's time in Rome is described in

the Bible's Acts 28:1-31:

- Arrival: Paul arrived in Rome as a prisoner, but was allowed to live under house arrest while awaiting his trial before Caesar.
- Preaching: Paul met with Jewish leaders to teach about Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God.
- Letters: Paul wrote several of his epistles (letters) while in Rome.
- End: Acts ends without describing Paul's trial or execution.

He is ultimately acquitted of all the charges against him and is freed in 63 A.D. Paul's fifth and final missionary journey begins when he is set free in Rome. He immediately travels to the island of Crete, then Nicopolis, then makes his promised journey to Spain (Romans 15:24, 28) and likely to Britain. Paul is once again a prisoner in Rome in 67 A.D.

In addition to Luke (who wrote *Luke's Gospel* and the *Acts of the Apostles* while staying with Paul in 60-62AD), Paul's companions in **Rome** include Timothy (see Colossians 1:1, Philippians 1:1 & 2:19-23), Aristarchus (see Acts 20:4 & 27:2), Epaphrus (see Colossians 1:7), Joshua Justus, Demas and John Mark. Paul has been reconciled with John Mark since he refused to take him on his Second Missionary Journey in 50AD (see Acts 15:37-38, Colossians 4:10-14 & Philemon 1:23). Mark probably wrote his gospel in **Rome** around the same time as Luke was writing his, so it is hardly surprising that parts of their accounts are almost identical.

Paul is considered one of the most important people in the history of Christianity after Jesus. He was a leader in the first generation of Christians and his letters have had a huge influence on Christianity. Legend says that Paul was beheaded in Rome as a martyr for his faith (a method of execution allowed citizens of the Empire) in the spring of 68. His head is said to have bounced three times to the ground, causing three springs to appear. The springs are said to have miraculous properties, and believers collected water from them until more modern times.

New Testament Letters in Literary Context

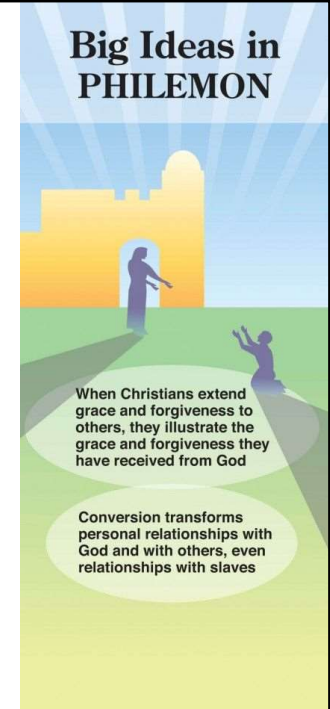
[Video Link](#)

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Overview of Philemon

- A prison letter from Paul to Philemon, a leader in the Colossian church, written around 60 AD.
- Philemon was a wealthy Christian in Colossae. Onesimus was a slave that had departed from Philemon.
- Paul asks Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a fellow believer in Christ, not as a slave.
- Forgiveness and reconciliation are the key themes.
- The difference between law and grace portrayed.



The letter to Philemon is a prison letter, written around 60 AD. It deals with the practice of slavery, with themes of [forgiveness](#) and [reconciliation](#). Philemon was a wealthy Christian, possibly a bishop of the church that met in his home (Philemon 1:1–2) in Colossae. Onesimus was a slave that had departed from his master Philemon, was returning with this epistle wherein Paul asked Philemon to receive him as a "brother beloved. Paul felt that Onesimus should return to Philemon but not as a slave; rather, under a bond of familial love. Paul also was not suggesting that Onesimus be punished, in spite of the fact that Roman law allowed the owner of a runaway slave nearly unlimited privileges of punishment, even execution.^mThis is a concern of Paul and a reason he is writing to Philemon, asking that Philemon accept Onesimus back in a bond of friendship, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Paul is undermining this example of a human institution which dehumanizes people. Onesimus, like Philemon, belongs to Christ, and so "Christ, and not Philemon, has a claim on Onesimus' honor and obedience."

Paul had warned slave owners that they had a responsibility towards their slaves and showed slaves as responsible moral beings who were to fear God. In Philemon, Paul did not condemn slavery, but he presented Onesimus as a Christian brother instead of

a slave. When an owner can refer to a slave as a brother, the slave has reached a position in which the legal title of slave is meaningless. The early church did not attack slavery directly but it laid the foundation for a new relationship between owner and slave. Paul attempted to unite both Philemon and Onesimus with Christian love so that emancipation would become necessary. Only after exposure to the light of the gospel could the institution of slavery die. Perhaps nowhere in the New Testament is the distinction between law and grace so beautifully portrayed. Both Roman law and the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament gave Philemon the right to punish a runaway slave who was considered property. But the covenant of grace through the Lord Jesus allowed both master and slave to fellowship in love on an equal basis in the body of Christ.

The

Letter to Philemon

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aW9Q3Jt6Yvk>



Colossians

- Written by Paul ~61 AD from Rome
- The leader and founder of the church. Epaphras, had visited Paul and told him about the problems at the church. Paul's letter addresses these issues.
- Jesus is the supreme power and is all people need to experience the fullness of God.
- False teachers were telling the Colossians they needed to add Jewish rituals and mystical experiences to experience the fullness of God. Paul discredits this idea.
- Christians are urged by Paul to live a godly life. Lasting growth and transformation comes from God alone.

Big Ideas in COLOSSIANS

Teaching the wrong things about Christ can destroy a church

Christ is God and Creator

Christ is superior to the angels and is the head of the church

The Christian's union with Christ results in holy living



Colossians was written by the apostle Paul from prison in around 61 AD. The letter was written to address issues that Epaphras (leader of that church) raised when visiting Paul in Prison and to challenge them to a higher devotion to Jesus. Paul wanted to teach the Colossian church that Christ is the supreme power over the entire universe and urged Christians to live godly lives. Paul knows that true and ultimate devotion to Jesus doesn't come primarily from being commanded, but from being enraptured by the beauty and profound love of Jesus. Paul begins the letter with a poem about the power and love of Jesus. This poem depicts Jesus as the human embodiment of the Creator and the head of the New Creation that is reconciled to its creator. Jesus is the redeemer – the head of the body of the church. As Christ is the author of the entirety of creation, he is also the author of the entirety of the New Creation.

Someone had infiltrated the church in Colossae and was deceiving them into thinking that they needed to add Jewish rituals, harsh treatment of their body, and mystical experiences to really know and experience God. Paul reminds them that Jesus himself is the very fullness of God and that in him they have been made complete. If they have Jesus, they already have experienced the fullness of God. They don't need all those other things. Entering into Jesus and being

baptized into him reconciled them to God and gave them a brand new identity. Now they are the people of God and they can live the way God created them to live.

The city of Collosae lies about 100 miles east of Ephesus to the western side of what is modern-day Turkey. In Paul's day, it lay within Asia Minor. In the fourth and fifth centuries B.C., Colossae was wealthy and large due to its wool industry, but by Paul's day it was described by a contemporary geographer as a "small town" (Strabo, *Geography*. 12.8.13). There was a decent-sized Jewish population in the city, since approximately 2000 Jewish families settled in the area in the second century B.C. Paul had never been to Colossae, but the church there began under the influence of his ministry. On his third missionary journey, Paul spent 3 years in Ephesus. During this time Paul's coworkers and disciples spread the news about Jesus to the surrounding cities and thus "all Asia heard the word" (Acts 19:10). One such co-worker was Epaphras who was a native of Colossae and was responsible for the founding of the church in there around A.D. 54.

Christians are urged by Paul to live a godly life. Lasting growth and transformation comes from God alone. Growing in faith, hope and love results in a grace and peace from God the Father evidenced by their love for one another in the Spirit.

Letter to the Colossians

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pTXIDxQsvc>



Ephesians

- Written by Paul ~61 AD
- Jesus is the supreme power and is all people need to experience the fullness of God.
- False teachers were telling the Colossians they needed to add Jewish rituals and mystical experiences to experience the fullness of God. Paul discredits this idea.
- Christians are urged by Paul to live a godly life. Lasting growth and transformation comes from God alone.

Big Ideas in EPHESIANS



God gives his people a purpose for living

Christians are chosen to be holy and are created in Christ Jesus to do good works

God's love for his people is bigger than anyone can imagine

By his death, Christ unites believers as members of the same body—the church

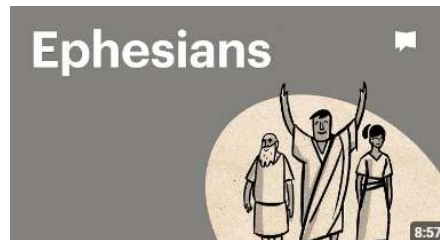
Believers are called to live in a manner consistent with their salvation in Christ

Christians fight a spiritual battle; God provides the weapons

Letter to the Ephesians

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y71r-T98E2Q>



First Timothy

- Written by Paul from Macedonia to Timothy, a young pastor and protégé of Paul in Ephesus. It was written ~62-66 AD
- Some scholars believe the letter may have been written after Paul's death by a student of Paul and ascribed to Paul after his death
- Considered a pastoral letter, with Titus and Second Timothy.
- Letter is about church leadership. It's a leadership manual for church organization and administration.
- Lays foundation for ordaining elders.
- Message is to resist false teaching, remain faithful to the Gospel message, exhibit good conduct and order the church in a way that all of this can be accomplished.

Big Ideas in 1 TIMOTHY

Oppose false teachers;
reinforce those who
teach sound doctrine

Living above reproach can
affect the success of efforts
to spread the gospel

Church leaders are
held to a higher
standard than others

Keep fighting the good
fight of faith; don't give up

Godliness with contentment
is the measure of true riches

The letter is addressed to [Timothy](#) in Ephesus, from which the [Apostle Paul](#) has departed for Macedonia. Many scholars, however, believe it is pseudonymous – written after the death of Paul late in the first century or even early in the second by someone following the teachings of Paul and writing in his name. It is considered one of three pastoral letters, along with Titus and Second Timothy. The letter is about leadership in the early church. It exhorts its readers to resist false teaching, hold on to the faith as delivered, exhibit good conduct, and order the church in such a way that all of this can be accomplished.

Timothy was a Greek. His mother was a Jewess and his father was Greek. Paul was more than just a mentor and leader to Timothy, he was like a father to him, and Timothy was like a son to Paul ([1 Timothy 1:2](#)).

Paul wrote to Timothy to encourage him in his responsibility for overseeing the work of the Ephesian church and possibly the other churches in the province of Asia ([1 Timothy 1:3](#)). This letter lays the foundation for ordaining elders ([1 Timothy 3:1-7](#)), and provides guidance for ordaining people into offices of the church ([1 Timothy 3:8-](#)

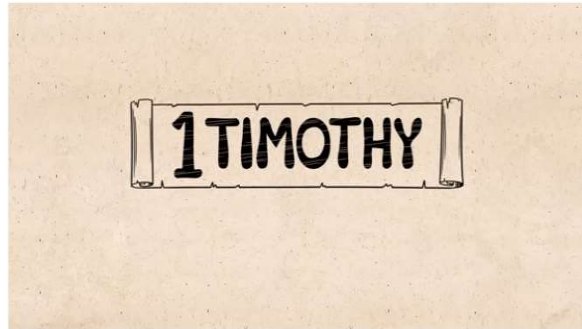
[13](#)). In essence, 1 Timothy is a leadership manual for church organization and administration.

Paul plans to return, but he may be delayed, so he sends instructions to Timothy and expects him to carry them out while he is away. Much of the letter contrasts true and false teachers and prescribes a specific church order. Although the letter is addressed to Timothy, the author sometimes “talks past” him to a larger community that is to hear certain exhortations. For example, all are to honor [elders](#) who rule well, preach, and teach; and enslaved individuals are to obey their masters. This letter is significant for its emphasis on the goodness of God, the goodness of creation, and living in the world rather than fleeing from it.

First Letter to Timothy

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7RoqnGcEjcs>



SKIP IN CLASS PRESENTATION

Titus

- Written by Paul ~66 AD from Nicopolis in Epirus to his protégé Titus in Crete.
- A pastoral letter
- Identifies what to look for in church leaders
- Warns Titus about the people living in Crete
- Warns against adding works to the gift of grace
- Seek a daily renewing of our minds by the Holy Spirit to learn better how to honor God by the way we live.

Big Ideas in TITUS

Church leaders are called to be above reproach and to serve as examples to others

Immoral Christians discredit the truth of the very gospel they proclaim

The young, the old and slaves are to have self-control and be treated with respect

False teachers threaten the church



This letter was written by Paul to encourage his brother in the faith, Titus, whom he had left in Crete to lead the church which Paul had established on one of his missionary journeys ([Titus 1:5](#)). This letter advises Titus regarding what qualifications to look for in leaders for the church. He also warns Titus of the reputations of those living on the island of Crete ([Titus 1:12](#)). Paul also encouraged Titus to return to Nicopolis for a visit. In other words, Paul continued to disciple Titus and others as they grew in the grace of the Lord ([Titus 3:13](#)).

The island of Crete where Titus was left by Paul to lead the church was inhabited by natives of the island and Jews who did not know the truth of Jesus Christ ([Titus 1:12-14](#)). Paul felt it to be his responsibility to follow through with Titus to instruct and encourage him in developing leaders within the church at Crete. As the apostle Paul directed Titus in his search for leaders, Paul also suggested how Titus would instruct the leaders so that they could grow in their faith in Christ. His instructions included those for both men and women of all ages ([Titus 2:1-8](#)). Paul finds it necessary to instruct the leaders of the church to be on guard against the Judaizers, those who sought to add works to the gift of grace which produces salvation. He warns against those who are rebellious deceivers, especially those who continued to claim circumcision and adherence to the rituals and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law were

still necessary ([Titus 1:10-11](#)). This is a recurring theme throughout the epistles of Paul, and in the book of Titus, he goes so far as to say their mouths must be stopped.

The Book of Titus deserves our attention as we look to the Bible for instruction on how to live a life pleasing to our Lord. We can learn what we should avoid as well as that which we are to strive to imitate. Paul suggests we seek to be pure as we avoid the things which will defile our minds and consciences. And then Paul makes a statement which should never be forgotten: “They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good” ([Titus 1:16](#)). As Christians, we must examine ourselves to be sure our lives line up with our profession of faith in Christ ([2 Corinthians 13:5](#)). Along with this warning, Paul also tells us how to avoid denying God: “He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior” ([Titus 3:5b-6](#)). By seeking a daily renewal of our minds by the Holy Spirit we can develop into Christians that honor God by the way we live.

Book of Titus

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUEYCVXJM3k>



Maybe skip??

2 Timothy

- Written by Paul ~67AD shortly before he was put to death
- A pastoral letter
- Expressed concern for the churches and for Timothy
- Encouraged Timothy to persevere in the faith and proclaim the sound doctrine of the gospel of Jesus
- Warned Timothy of false teachers

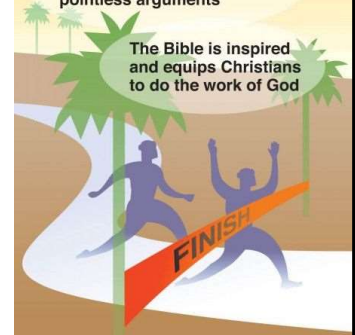
Big Ideas in 2 TIMOTHY

Believers are called to follow the good examples of those who have held on to faith

Believers can rely on the authority of Scripture and need to handle it correctly

Paul calls believers to follow sound doctrine but avoid pointless arguments

The Bible is inspired and equips Christians to do the work of God



[2 Timothy 1:1](#) identifies the author of the Book of 2 Timothy as the apostle Paul. The letter was written in approximately A.D. 67, shortly before the apostle Paul was put to death. Imprisoned in Rome yet again, the apostle Paul felt lonely and abandoned. Paul recognized that his earthly life was likely coming to an end soon. The Book of 2 Timothy is essentially Paul's "last words." Paul looked past his own circumstances to express concern for the churches and specifically for Timothy. Paul wanted to use his last words to encourage Timothy, and all other believers, to persevere in faith ([2 Timothy 3:14](#)) and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ ([2 Timothy 4:2](#)).

Paul encourages Timothy to remain passionate for Christ and to remain firm in sound doctrine ([2 Timothy 1:1-2](#), [13-14](#)). Paul reminds Timothy to avoid ungodly beliefs and practices and to flee from anything immoral ([2 Timothy 2:14-26](#)). In the end times there will be both intense persecution and apostasy from the Christian faith ([2 Timothy 3:1-17](#)). Paul closes with an intense plea for believers to stand firm in the faith and to finish the race strong ([2 Timothy 4:1-8](#)).

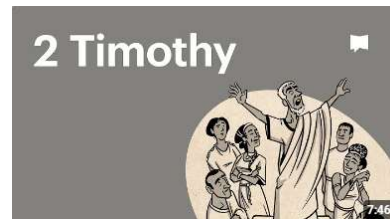
So concerned was Paul to warn Timothy and those he pastored of the dangers of false teachers that he invoked the story of the Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses ([Exodus 7:11, 22; 8:7, 18, 19; 9:11](#)). Although their names are not mentioned in the

Old Testament, tradition has it that these men instigated the building of the golden calf and were killed with the rest of the idolaters ([Exodus 32](#)). Paul predicts the same fate for those who resist the truth of Christ, their folly eventually being made “clear to everyone” ([2 Timothy 3:9](#)).

Second Letter to Timothy

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urlvnxCaL00&t>



SKIP



The Apostle Peter

- Significant in history of the early church.
- Mostly active in Jerusalem church but travelled to Rome between 42 and 54 AD. Also founded church in Antioch
- Mark likely wrote his gospel based on Peter's account of Jesus' ministry
- First among Jesus' disciples to identify him as the Messiah
- One of the first two apostles to witness the empty tomb
- First among the 12 to confirm the conversion of gentiles
- Only human author of Scripture to refer to Paul's letters and associate them with Scripture.

The Apostle Peter is the only other Apostle who can be said to be Paul's equal in terms of significance for the history of the early church. His given name was Simon ([Matt. 4:18](#); [Mark 1:16](#); [Luke 5:4](#)), but he would become most well-known as Petros, the Greek translation of the Aramaic nickname Cephas (meaning "rock"), given to him by Jesus ([Matt. 16:18](#)). His prominence in the early church is anticipated by his special naming by Jesus and would develop in light of his association with the church at Rome ([1 Peter 5:13](#)). He also founded the church in Antioch

After Jesus' resurrection, Peter was a prominent figure in the Jerusalem church, where he performed miracles, preached, and led the congregation:

- Reaffirmed his love for Jesus: Jesus reminded Peter of their friendship and confirmed his love for Peter.
- Received instructions: Jesus gave Peter instructions on how to spread the gospel.
- Preached to crowds: Peter addressed the crowds gathered in Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost.
- Performed miracles: Peter's miracles drew people's attention.
- Explained the rejection of Jesus: Peter explained that the Jerusalemites had rejected and put to death the Holy One of God.

- Converted thousands: Peter's messages and miracles led thousands more to believe.

Peter was eventually imprisoned by King Herod, but was miraculously freed from prison on the night before his trial. He was then taken prisoner and sentenced to death by crucifixion. After leaving Jerusalem, Peter likely took on a missionary role, while James, the brother of Jesus, became the leader of the church. Peter traveled to Rome between 42 and 54 AD, where he spread the faith. He was crucified in Rome under Emperor Nero.

Here are five things about Peter that can help explain his prominence among Christ's Apostles.

1. Mark likely wrote his gospel based on Peter's account of Jesus' ministry. Most scholars today understand Mark's gospel to be the first written among the four accounts. The early church historian Eusebius reports testimony from Papias that Mark wrote his account based on Peter's teaching concerning Jesus. According to Papias: "Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote accurately all that he remembered, not, indeed, in order, of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had not heard the Lord, nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, followed Peter, who used to give teaching as necessity demanded but not making, as it were, an arrangement of the Lord's oracles, so that Mark did nothing wrong in thus writing down single points as he remembered them."

2. Peter was the first among Jesus' disciples to identify Him as the Messiah (Matt. 16:16; Mark 8:29; Luke 9:20). This is the occasion where Jesus designates Simon as "the rock" (Peter). However, Mark and Matthew also demonstrate that Peter likely had not yet grasped how that identity would contradict prevailing expectations of God's kingdom and its coming. Indeed, in the very next passage where Peter rebukes Jesus for speaking about His betrayal, death, and resurrection, Jesus responds by rebuking the newly named Peter as "Satan" ([Matt. 16:21–23](#); [Mark 8:31–33](#)). Both Peter's first sermon in Acts ([Acts 2:14–36](#)) and the opening blessing of his first epistle ([1 Peter 1:3–5](#)) demonstrate that he would eventually never forget that moment's lesson on the centrality of Christ's death and resurrection for the coming of God's kingdom.

3. Peter was also among the first two Apostles to witness the empty tomb (Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–10). Like Peter's recognition of Jesus as Messiah, this event also demonstrates the inability to grasp the full significance of Christ's death and resurrection apart from Jesus' own teaching and the work of the Holy Spirit. In Luke's gospel, it is only after Jesus instructed Peter and John in the Scriptures about Himself and signified it in the breaking of bread that they understood ([Luke 24:25–35](#)). In

John's gospel, they leave the empty tomb not yet understanding ([John 20:9](#)). It is only later when Jesus appears to them that He then breathes the Holy Spirit upon them to equip them for their upcoming gospel mission ([John 20:21–23](#)).

4. Peter is the first among the Twelve to witness and confirm the conversion of the gentiles in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles. This happens in an ironic fashion that seems to echo Peter's initial resistance to Jesus' death and resurrection message, as well as his behavior at Christ's crucifixion. Peter receives his famous vision wherein three times he's resistant to Jesus' command and is then corrected by Him ([Acts 10:1–16; 11:5–10](#)). It is during the next moment when three men visit Peter and he is explaining the significance of his vision to them that the Holy Spirit falls upon them, confirming that they too should be baptized as Christians ([Acts 10:17–48; 11:11–18](#)).

5. Finally, the Apostle Peter is the only human author of Scripture within his own inspired work to refer to Paul's letters and associate them with Scripture. At the conclusion of his instruction concerning the coming day of the Lord, Peter reminds his readers to be patient, just as Paul had also written them concerning these things ([2 Peter 3:14–15](#)). In an encouraging example of humility, and a demonstration of growth in God's grace for one who in the past was slow to understand, Peter recognizes that there are some things about these matters in Paul's letters that are hard to understand ([2 Peter 3:16a](#)). Thus, Peter warns his readers to avoid the teaching of some who seek to twist Paul's words and the other Scriptures to deceive them ([2 Peter 3:16b–17](#)).

While many more things could be said to explain Peter's prominence among Christ's Apostles, the points outlined above compel us to focus on a common theme: the redemption and transformation that comes by faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ despite our own weakness.

1 Peter

- Written by Peter between AD 60 and 65 to the believers who had been dispersed throughout the ancient world and were under intense persecution.
- Peter says to rejoice even in persecution – suffer for the sake of Christ as Jesus suffered for them.
- Identifies Satan as the great enemy of every Christian.
- Christ’s future return gives hope.
- Peter explains Old Testament passages in light of the life and work of the Messiah

Big Ideas in 1 PETER

Peter encourages Christians to endure persecution

Christians can rejoice in the middle of suffering because of the new life God has given them

Suffering tests the genuineness of one's faith

God's people are called to live as a royal priesthood and holy nation who give praise to God for rescuing them

Christians are called to strive daily to live holy lives

People who reject Jesus, the cornerstone, will stumble and fall



Written by Peter between AD 60 and 65 to the believers who had been dispersed throughout the ancient world and were under intense persecution. If anyone understood persecution, it was Peter. He was beaten, threatened, punished, and jailed for preaching the Word of God. He knew what it took to endure without bitterness, without losing hope and in great faith living an obedient, victorious life. This knowledge of living hope in Jesus was the message, and Christ’s example was the one to follow. Though this time of persecution was desperate, Peter reveals that it was actually a time to rejoice. He says to count it a privilege to suffer for the sake of Christ, as their Savior suffered for them. This letter makes reference to Peter’s personal experiences with Jesus and his sermons from the book of Acts. Peter confirms Satan as the great enemy of every Christian but the assurance of Christ’s future return gives the incentive of hope.

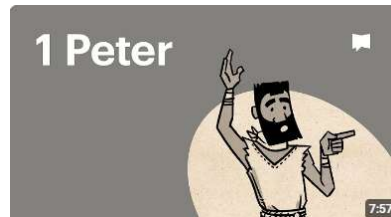
Peter’s familiarity with the Old Testament law and prophets enabled him to explain various OT passages in light of the life and work of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In [1 Peter 1:16](#), he quotes [Leviticus 11:44](#): “Be holy, for I am holy.” But he prefaces it by explaining that holiness is not achieved by keeping the law, but by the grace bestowed upon all who believe in Christ (v. 13). Further, Peter explains the reference to the “cornerstone” in [Isaiah 28:16](#) and [Psalm 118:22](#) as Christ, who was rejected by

the Jews through their disobedience and unbelief. Additional Old Testament references include the sinless Christ ([1 Peter 2:22](#) / [Isaiah 53:9](#)) and admonitions to holy living through the power of God which yields blessings ([1 Peter 3:10:12](#); [Psalm 34:12-16](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#); [Proverbs 3:34](#)).

1 Peter

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhP7AZQIzCg&t>



Jude

- Written by Jude, brother of James and half-brother of Jesus between 60 and 80 AD.
- Closely related to 2 Peter
- Written about the end times – the end of the church age.
- Warns against false teachers and advises on how to succeed in spiritual warfare
- Many references to the Old Testament

Big Ideas in JUDE

False teachers deny Christ's lordship

Christian freedom is not a license to do whatever one wants

Christians must educate themselves in the faith, pray, remain faithful and show mercy

Those who belong to Christ will be saved from eternal punishment and instead receive eternal life

[Jude 1](#) identifies the author of the Book of Jude as [Jude](#), a brother of James. This likely refers to Jesus' half-brother Jude, as Jesus also had a half-brother named James ([Matthew 13:55](#)). Jude likely does not identify himself as a brother of Jesus out of humility and reverence for Christ. The Book of Jude is closely related to the book of 2 Peter. The date of authorship for Jude depends on whether Jude used content from 2 Peter, or Peter used content from Jude when writing 2 Peter. The Book of Jude was written somewhere between A.D. 60 and 80.

The Book of Jude is an important book for us today because it is written for the end times, for the end of the church age. The church age began at the Day of Pentecost. Jude is the only book given entirely to the great apostasy. Jude writes that evil works are the evidence of apostasy. He admonishes us to contend for the faith, for there are tares among the wheat. False prophets are in the church and the saints are in danger. Jude is a small but important book worthy of study, written for the Christian of today.

Jude was anxious to write about our salvation; however, he changed topics to address contending for the faith. This faith embodies the complete body of Christian doctrine taught by Christ, later passed on to the apostles. After Jude warns of false teachers (verses 4-16), he advises us on how we can succeed in spiritual warfare

(verses 20-21). Here is wisdom we would do well to accept and adhere to as we go through these days of the end times. The Book of Jude is filled with references to the Old Testament, including the Exodus (v. 5); Satan's rebellion (v. 6); Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7); Moses' death (v. 9); Cain (v. 11); Balaam (v. 11); Korah (v. 11); Enoch (vv. 14,15); and Adam (v. 14). Jude's use of the well-known historical illustrations of Sodom and Gomorrah, Cain, Balaam, and Korah reminded the Jewish Christians of the necessity of true faith and obedience.

Jude

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UoCmakZmys>



2 Peter

- Written by Peter, however, his authorship has been questioned by scholars more than any other New Testament Book.
- Written toward the end of Peter's life ~65-68 AD
- Peter was warning against false teachers.
- True prophets moved by the Holy Spirit who spoke through them.
- Challenged believers to become mature in their faith.
- Affirmed the second coming of Christ

Big Ideas in 2 PETER

God's power has given
Christians everything they
need to live godly lives

False teachers threaten the
faithfulness of believers

Jesus will return; Christians
can prepare for that day by
living faithful lives



[2 Peter 1:1](#) specifically states that the apostle Peter was the author of 2 Peter. Peter's authorship of 2 Peter has been challenged more than that of any other book in the New Testament. However, the early church fathers found no good reason to reject it. We find no good reason to reject Peter's authorship of 2 Peter. The Book of 2 Peter was written toward the end of Peter's life. Since Peter was martyred in Rome during the reign of Nero, his death must have occurred prior to A.D. 68. He very likely wrote 2 Peter between A.D. 65 and 68. Peter was alarmed that false teachers were beginning to infiltrate the churches. He called on Christians to grow and become strong in their faith so that they could detect and combat the spreading apostasy. He strongly stressed the authenticity of the Word of God and the sure return of the Lord Jesus.

Knowing that his time was short ([2 Peter 1:13-15](#)) and these churches faced immediate danger ([2 Peter 2:1-3](#)), Peter called upon the readers to refresh their memories ([2 Peter 1:13](#)) and stimulate their thinking ([2 Peter 3:1-2](#)) so that they would remember his teaching ([2 Peter 1:15](#)). He challenged the believers to become more mature in their faith by adding to it specific Christians virtues, thereby becoming effective and productive in their knowledge of Jesus Christ ([2 Peter 1:5-9](#)). The Old and New Testament writers were set forth as their authority for their faith ([2](#)

[Peter 1:12-21](#), [3:2](#), [3:15-16](#)). Peter desired they become strong in their faith to withstand the false teachers that had crept in and adversely affected the churches. In his denunciation of them, he described their conduct, their condemnation, and their characteristics (2 Peter chapter 2), and also that they ridiculed the Lord's Second Coming ([2 Peter 3:3-7](#)). For the Christians, Peter taught that the Second Coming is the incentive for holy living ([2 Peter 3:14](#)). After a final warning, Peter again encouraged them to grow in the grace and knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He concluded with a word of praise to his Lord and Savior ([2 Peter 3:18](#)).

In his denunciation of false prophets, Peter repeats a prevalent Old Testament theme that must have been very familiar to his readers. Many of the early Christians were converted Jews who had been well taught in the law and the prophets. When Peter referred to the "word of the prophets" of the Old Testament in [2 Peter 1:19-21](#), he at one time denounced false prophets and affirmed that true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit who spoke through them ([2 Samuel 23:2](#)). Jeremiah was equally forceful in his criticism of false prophets, asking, "How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds?" ([Jeremiah 23:26](#)). Clearly, the same deluded false teachers who plagued God's people in both the Old and New Testaments are still with us, making Peter's second epistle as relevant today as it was 2,000 years ago.

2 Peter

[Video Link](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wWlv_ITyKyc&t



Titles of Christ

High priest (Heb. 3:1) *Seed of Abraham* (Gal. 3:16)
Immanuel, God with us (Matt. 1:23)
Chief Shepherd (1 Pet. 5:4)
Son of Man (Luke 19:10)
Bread of life (John 6:35)
Savior (Titus 1:4)
Light of the world (John 9:5)
Alpha and Omega (Rev. 21:6)
Head of the church (Col. 1:18)
Lamb of God (John 1:29)
Last Adam (1 Cor. 15:45)
Good Shepherd (John 10:11)
Prophet (Acts 3:22)
Apostle (Heb. 3:1)
Lion of Judah (Rev. 5:5)
Great Shepherd of the sheep (Heb. 13:20)
Chief Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20)
Word (John 1:1)
Messiah (Matt. 1:1) *Firstborn from among the dead* (Col. 1:18)
Root of David (Rev. 5:5)
Mediator between God and mankind (1 Tim. 2:5)

King of kings, Lord of lords (Rev. 19:16)
Son of God (Mark 1:1)
Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8)
One and only Son (John 1:14)
Holy One of God (Mark 1:24)



Readings for October 21

Jesus is the Victor!

Hebrews
1 John
2 John
3 John
Revelation

Closing Hymn

[Video Link](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnckBQK987A>



AC 27; PHM; COL 1-4; EPH 1-6; 1 TI 1-6; TITUS; 2 TI 1-4; 1 PE 1-5, JUDE, 2 PE 1-3

Week 48

Acts ends with Paul in a Roman prison awaiting trial. For two years, Paul lived there under guard in a rented house, and because he was free to receive visitors, he was able to keep in close touch with Christianity throughout the empire and even to send letters of instruction to churches he had founded.

One of the early heresies that confused early Christians is discussed in Colossians. Some people argued that all matter was evil; only the “spiritual” and immaterial can be “good.” What follows in this heresy is that Christ would never assume human form and what Christians do in their daily lives has nothing to do with spirituality, for daily life is conducted in the material world. Paul’s letter to the Colossians confronts this idea and presents Jesus Christ as God come in the flesh. Paul presents a powerful portrait of Jesus and his work on our behalf and offers an appealing description of the life by which Christians can honor him. Paul provides insight into how we can grow spiritually – something we are all called to do.

When Paul and his missionary team reached Ephesus, it was the leading city in Asia Minor, made rich by the pilgrims who flocked to the city to visit the magnificent temple of Diana (Artemis). The population of the city was spiritually hungry and deeply involved in dark occult practices. Paul’s presentation of the Gospel was so effective that it literally threatened the livelihood of citizens who depended on the sales of religious medals and on feeding and housing visitors. Christianity is a relational faith – the “church” is not a building, but people who know God, who express his love in the way they live with one another, and who display his character in the holiness of their daily lives.

In addition to letters to churches, Paul also wrote to individuals, such as Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Timothy and Titus’ ministry was to correct false teaching and set local congregations on the path of godly living. These letters are filled with practical advice that still apply today. We also read letters of other early church leaders, such as Peter and Jude that further contribute to our understanding of Christian faith and life.

Weekly Reading Plan (pp. 1373-1408)

Day 1: AC 27:1 -15; AC 28:16-31; PHM 1:1-25
Day 2: COL 1:1-4:18
Day 3: EPH 1:1-6:24
Day 4: 1 TI 1:1-6:21
Day 5: TITUS 1:1-3:15; 2 TI 1:1-4:22
Day 6: 1 PE 1:1-5:14
Day 7: JUDE 1:1-25; 2 PE 1:1-3:18

Outline

The Voyage to Rome (Day 1)
Imprisonment in Rome (Day 1)
Letter to Philemon (Day 1)
Letter to the Colossians (Day 2)
Letter to the Ephesians (Day 3)
First Letter to Timothy (Day 4)
Letter to Titus (Day 5)
2nd Letter to Timothy (Day 5)
1st Letter of Peter (Day 6)
Letter of Jude (Day 7)
2nd Letter of Peter (Day 7)

AC 27; PHM; COL 1-4; EPH 1-6; 1 TI 1-6; TITUS; 2 TI 1-4; 1 PE 1-5, JUDE, 2 PE 1-3

Week 48

Key Characters		Key Locations		Key Terms	
Paul	Julius	Sidon	Lycia	Kingdom of God	Salvation
Aristarchus	Publius	Lasea	Phoenix	Faith	Love
Timothy	Philemon	Crete	Malta	Reconciliation	Freedom
Onesimus	Tychicus	Rome	Colossae	Chosen people	Grace
Aristarchus	Archippus	Laodicea	Ephesus	Redemption	Predestined
Titus	Peter	Macedonia		Holy Spirit	Gentile
Silas	Jude			Holy	Peace
James				Maturity	Truth
				Submission	Prayer
				Eternal Life	Worship
				Purity	Hope
				Loyalty	Suffering

Key Verses:

I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. [PHM 1:4-6]

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins. [COL 2:13]

In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will – to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. [EPH 1:5-8]

Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. [1 TI 4:12]

At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. [TITUS 3:3-5]

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. [2 TI 1:8-9]

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you. [1 PE 1:3-4]

Dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt. [JUDE 20-22]

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. [2 PE 1:3-40]

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

Acts27: We set sail for Rome. A storm struck and all hope was lost. Paul said, "Take heart, we must run aground." Everyone reached land.

Acts28: On Malta Paul healed all who had diseases. We came to Rome. Paul lived under house arrest. He proclaimed the kingdom of God to all.

Phm1: Paul, a prisoner, to Philemon. I ask that you receive Onesimus back, not as a slave, but as a brother. Put his wrongs on my account.

Col1: Paul, to the saints in Colossae. May you be filled with wisdom. The Son is the image of the invisible God. I make known the mystery.

Col2: Let no one deceive you. You were buried with Christ and also raised with him. Why do you follow rules that do not restrain the flesh?

Col3: Seek the things above. Your life is hidden with Christ in God. So put to death your worldliness. Do everything in the name of Jesus.

Col4: Devote yourselves to prayer. Let your speech be gracious. Tychicus will tell you our news. Aristarchus, Mark and Epaphras greet you.

Eph1: Paul, to the saints in Ephesus. Praise the God who predestined us for adoption in Christ. May you know the riches of his inheritance.

Eph2: When we were dead in sin God made us alive with Christ. Gentiles are now fellow citizens. You are being built together into a temple.

Eph3: I preach the mystery of Christ. The wisdom of God is made known through the church. I pray that you may know the depth of his love.

Eph4: Therefore walk worthy of your calling. Christ gave each of us gifts to build up the body. Put off your old self and put on the new.

Eph5: Walk in love as Christ loved us. Walk as children of light. Expose the darkness. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church.

Eph6: Children, obey your parents. Slaves, obey your masters. Put on the whole armour of God to stand against the devil. Peace and grace.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

1Tim1: Paul, to Timothy my son. Stay in Ephesus to correct false teachers. Christ came into the world to save sinners. Glory to God forever!

1Tim2: Let prayers be made for all those in authority. God wants everyone to come to the knowledge of the truth. Let women learn in silence.

1Tim3: An overseer must be respectable and manage his family well. Deacons must be dignified and not greedy. Godliness is a great mystery.

1Tim4: In later times some will depart from the faith. Have nothing to do with godless myths. Devote yourself to Scripture and to teaching.

1Tim5: Put widows over sixty on the list. Younger widows should marry. Elders who rule well are worthy of double honour. Keep yourself pure.

1Tim6: Those who contradict the teaching of Christ understand nothing. The love of money is a root of evil. Fight the good fight of faith.

Tit1: Paul, a servant of God, to Titus. I left you in Crete to appoint elders. Deceivers must be silenced. To the impure nothing is pure.

Tit2: Teach what is consistent with sound doctrine. Men are to be steadfast, women reverent. The grace of God trains us to live godly lives.

Tit3: Show consideration to all. We were once slaves but God saved us. Believers should maintain good works. Everyone here sends greetings.

2Tim1: Paul, to Timothy my son. Fan into flame the gift of God. Share in suffering for the gospel. Hold to the standard of sound teaching.

2Tim2: No soldier gets entangled with civilian affairs. Present yourself to God as an approved worker. Cleanse yourself for honorable use.

2Tim3: In the last days people will be proud and unholy. As for you, continue in what you have learned. All Scripture is inspired by God.

2Tim4: Preach the word in and out of season. I have finished my race. Come to me soon with Mark. Beware of Alexander. The Lord be with you.

Chapter Summaries (from @biblesummary)

1Pet1: Peter, to the diaspora. God has given us new birth through Christ. The prophets told of this grace. So be holy in all your conduct.

1Pet2: You are being built up to be a royal priesthood. Submit to human authority. Live as servants of God. Follow Christ in his suffering.

1Pet3: Wives, submit to your husbands. Husbands, honour your wives. Repay evil with blessing. Christ suffered for sins to bring us to God.

1Pet4: Do not live for human desires but for the will of God. The end is near. Love each other deeply. Do not be surprised when trials come.

1Pet5: Elders should be examples to the flock. Clothe yourselves with humility. Resist the devil. God will strengthen you. Peace to you all.

Jude1: Jude, to the elect. Ungodly people pervert grace into sensuality. They are judged as twice dead trees. Build yourselves up in faith.

2Pet1: Peter, to those of faith. God has given us great promises. So supplement faith with virtue and love. We were eyewitnesses of Christ.

2Pet2: False teachers will arise. If God did not spare angels then he knows how to punish the unrighteous. They are slaves of corruption.

2Pet3: Scoffers will say, "Where is his return?" The Lord is not slow, but patient. Untaught people twist the Scriptures. Grow in Christ.

What did I learn about God?

- Has God ever used a disaster in your life for ministry? What have you learned from this?
- At times, have certain people (or forces) seemed to be more powerful than Jesus in your life? Why? How do you respond to the fact that even these are under Christ's authority?
- In EPH 2:1-10 Paul talks about being made alive in Christ. What in your life is due only to God's presence and goodness?
- How do you picture God? What does it mean to you to have God's spirit in your inner being?
- How has your understanding of God changed as you have grown in your faith?

What did I learn about human nature?

- What bothers your non-Christian friends about the faith? How can you help them overcome those barriers?
- If a person knew only rejection and pain in their relationship, how can this person come to understand the love of God in a personal way? What insight does EPH 3:14-21 shed on this?
- How would you compare moral standards today with the moral standards in Paul's day, based on his writings to the churches?
- What does it mean to put off your old self [EPH 4:22] and to put on the new self [EPH 4:24]? What should characterize the lives of those living as children of light [EPH 5:8]?
- Read 1 TI 5:1-25. How would you compare this ancient system of dealing with older people to our modern system? What should be the Christian's / Church's responses to the welfare issue?

What did I learn about my life/relationship with God?

- In ACTS 27:13-44, Paul faces a storm. What is the greatest pressure situation you are facing now? How can Paul's example and the principles you've learned from his experience help you? What is your part and what is God's part in the resolution of your storm?
- How does ACTS 28:31 [Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.], set the stage for the way your life could become a continuation of Acts 28? What do you need to build into your life now, so that your faith in Christ will be what people remember about you at death?
- For whom might you serve as a Paul in bringing about reconciliation?
- In COL 2:6-23, Paul talks about freedom from human regulations through life with Christ. Where are you still susceptible to getting caught up in rule keeping?
- Of the qualities listed in EPH 4:2 [Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.], which did you demonstrate the best today?